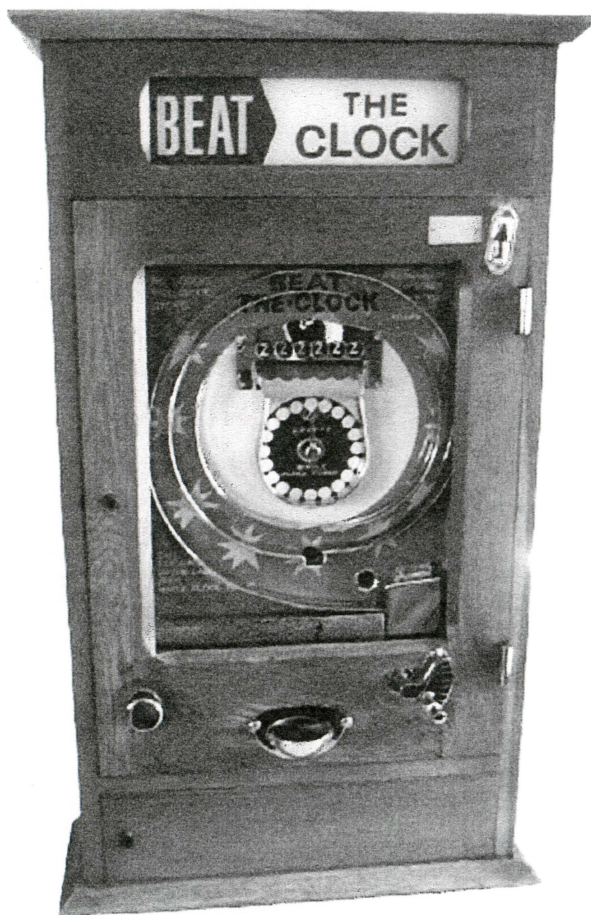


# **MECHANICAL MEMORIES**

## **Magazine**

ISSUE 48

SEPT. 2010



*The only UK magazine for collectors of vintage coin-operated amusements*

# Mechanical Memories Magazine

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# Editorial

Hello, and welcome to the September magazine. Well, the summer's more or less over now (although I'm sure many of you are probably still waiting for it to start), and my season down at Brighton will be over in a couple of months. Not surprisingly, the school holidays were not particularly good; in fact all in all, it's been a pretty crap year. No doubt this has been partly due to the weather, even as late as May, people were still coming into the arcade with their winter coats on! Anyway, it was really good to see some of you who came down to Brighton during the holidays, and particularly a few new faces who I met for the first time.

Now, I'm looking forward to a slightly more relaxing time over the next couple of weeks, following the last hectic few months, but it ain't gonna to last long! Yes, auction time is fast approaching, and the entry forms will be included with the October magazines, which I'm hoping will be out fairly close to the beginning of the month. OK, I know it's been a long time since the magazine's been out anywhere near the beginning of the month, but I'm hoping I'll be able to pull it forward now that Sharron's completed her studies. Anyway, start thinking about your entries, so that you can get those forms back to me super-quick (like you always do)!

And finally, apologies to those of you who have been following Nick's Dreamland updates each month, because there isn't one this time! I'm afraid it's my fault for not giving Nick enough notice of when I needed to get to the printers, but I'm sure we'll be back on track next month.

Until next time

All the best

*Jerry*

P.S. I'm getting really short on articles, in fact I have only one for next month. So please think about writing something for the mag. Thanks in advance!

# News and Coming Events

## Dreamland Heritage Tour

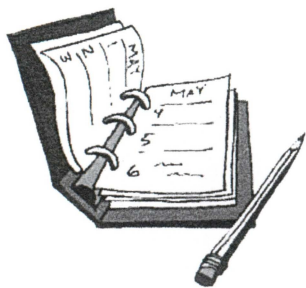
As part of the British Heritage Open Days, which took place throughout the country between Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> of this month, Margate opened its doors to a number of heritage sites, including Dreamland. A two hour tour of the Dreamland site, which includes the grade II listed scenic railway and Dreamland cinema, was scheduled for 11 am on Friday 10<sup>th</sup>. Unfortunately, as I've spent most of the last couple of months in Brighton, I didn't find out about it until two days before. Nonetheless, in eager anticipation, I phoned the booking number only to be told the tour was fully booked. The nice young lady then informed me that the event had proved so popular, that another tour had been arranged for 3.00 in the afternoon. "Great" I said, "that will suit me fine", only to be informed that that was fully booked also. Undeterred, and with unwarranted optimism, I tried the old 'press' trick, even mentioning that Nick writes a regular Dreamland report for the magazine.....didn't work!

Anyway, I was told that due to the overwhelming demand, further tours would be arranged at later dates. So even though I didn't make it this time, it is really good to know that interest in the Dreamland Heritage project is alive and well..... and I will definitely try to get on the next one!

## Coventry '10

As I've mentioned on the previous page, the *Central England Vintage Coin-op Collectors Show and Auction* is fast approaching, and entry forms will be going out in the next few weeks. Jeremy and I are very proud that this event has now established itself as the biggest in the UK, but this can only continue with your support. Last year we had about 275 lots in the auction – our biggest yet, and I have every reason to believe it could be even bigger this year, as we already have about 50 lots committed! I'm not sure whether I want to see the event grow much bigger, so please get your forms in ASAP, because if it looks like the auction is going to over-subscribed, I may have to restrict entry to magazine subscribers only, and late entries almost certainly will not be accepted. So please get those forms back to me, as I don't want any of you to miss out.





## *Dates for your diary*

**Jukebox Madness Show** 25<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup> September  
Kempton Park racecourse

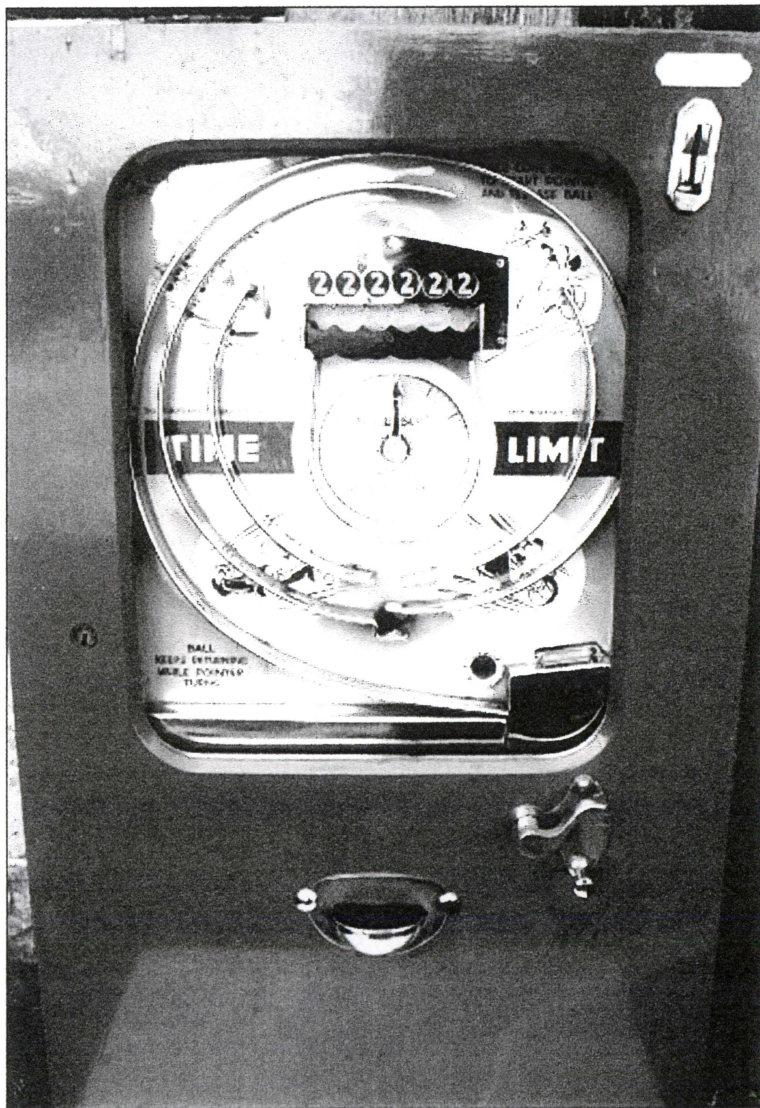
**MMM Vintage Slot Collectors' Show & Auction** 28<sup>th</sup> November  
Coundon Social Club, Coventry

**Bonhams Mechanical Music & Scientific Instruments Sale** 7<sup>th</sup> December  
Knowle

## **2011**

**Brighton Jukebox Show** 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> April  
Brighton racecourse

Don't forget – if you know of any event which would be of interest to readers of the magazine, please let me know so that I can include details on this page.



# Timer Machines

By Robert Rowland

Back we go to Mablethorpe and the swinging sixties, 1968 to be precise. A new wall machine had just arrived in Queens Arcade – it was always a big thrill for us kids when a new slot was unveiled in any amusement arcade. A friend and I rushed up to view this latest machine, and the attendant who was standing nearby said “That’s a good ‘un.”

I could see it was made by AMM (Amusement Machine Mart) and this was the only one in town; it was called **Time Limit**. I also noticed that the case was somewhat smaller than, say, the Ruffler & Walker Fill ‘em Up type cabinets, and that it was housed in a red case, which made this slot stand out that bit more. The backflash displayed a sporting type theme, with four circled pictures showing a speedboat, pedal cycle, racing car and a motor cycle. The most significant part of the playfield had a clock-type pointer, which turned clockwise one full circle. When a coin was inserted, the ball would be released and the pointer start to turn. So long as the pointer was turning, the ball would be returned for further play after each game.

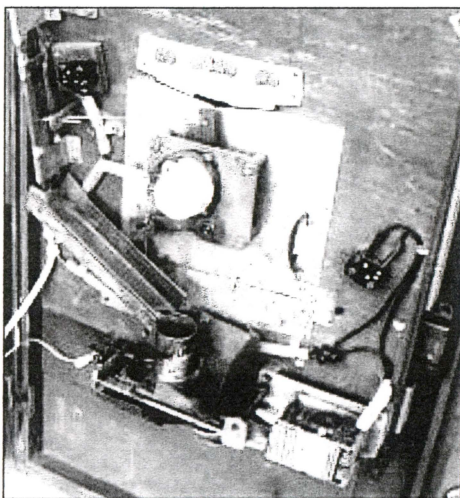


*Detail of the Time Limit playfield and timer.*



When the pointer stopped, the ball would be retained in the machine. However, if the ball was still in play when the pointer stopped, a win would still be paid out. The ball gallery had six win cups, all paying 2d. The usual sprung pins were there to make winning that bit harder, and of course, there was a lost hole below. Time limit boasted an electrical payout system, which was unusual for an allwin. When the ball landed in a win, it would drop down inside the machine onto a micro switch, which then activated a solenoid for a one-pulse 2d win.

When a coin is inserted, the ball is released and the pointer starts to turn. I have timed this, and a full circle of the pointer takes only eleven seconds (not very long when you think about it). I played my machine fifty times, and the average was three spins per game. Odd times I achieved four plays, but these were all losers. The most I ever got was two wins. Maybe three wins could be achieved, but this would take some doing. This game is what I call amusement; fun to play, a bit of skill and gave a lot of enjoyment. Also, Time Limit was something different from the usual one-flick allwins.



*Inside Time Limit, showing the centrally positioned motor and solenoid payout.*

There was another similar machine around the same time called **Beat the Clock**, possibly made by Kraft, as it was housed in the Extrawin type cabinet. I have an inkling that this came out before time Limit, but I may be wrong. I have a good friend who owns a Beat the Clock, and he informs me that there were two versions of this machine. One version had a mechanical payout, meaning you had to turn the payout knob for your win (how many seconds would that take off the clock timer)? The other version had a solenoid payout, identical to the Time Limit. He has the solenoid payout version and he informs me that his Beat the Clock timer runs for exactly the same number of seconds as my Time Limit.





*Detail of Beat the Clock. Note the similarities with Time Limit.*

These two slots are so similar, and both great machines in their time. Do any readers remember either of these? If you would like to see a two-minute clip of Time Limit in action, go onto Youtube and type in 'penny slot time limit' and you will see the machine in full working order.

Back in 1968, I never dreamed for one second that one day I would own a Time Limit penny slot machine that I was playing and getting so much pleasure from at that time. Even today, this penny slot machine brings back so many happy memories of those 1968 summer holiday days. Where has the time gone?

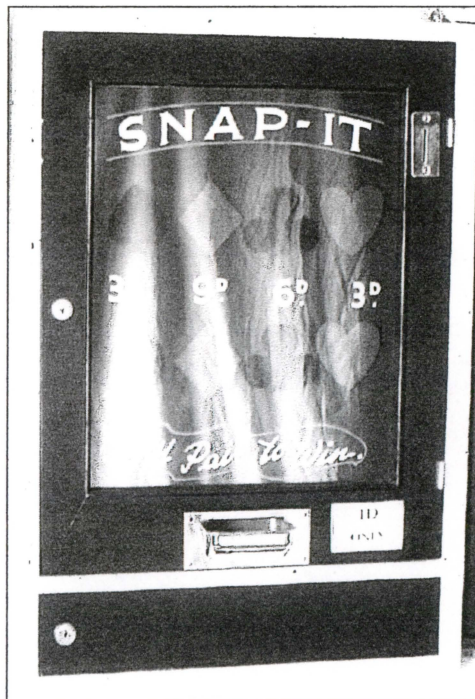
***Robert Rowland***

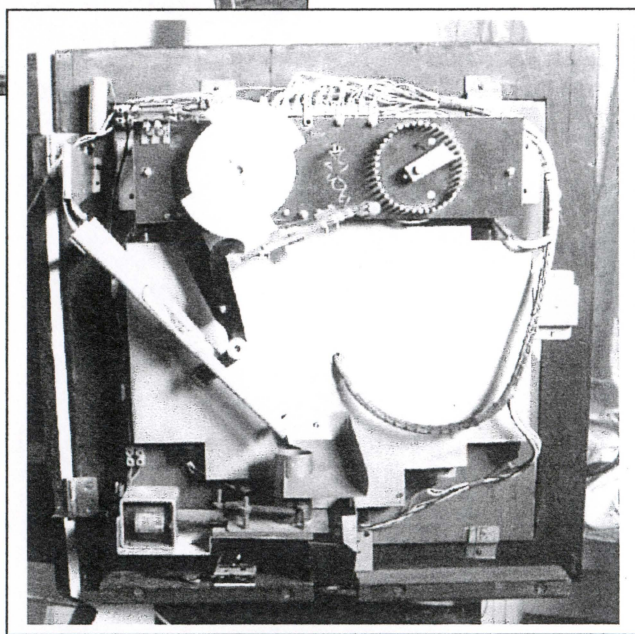
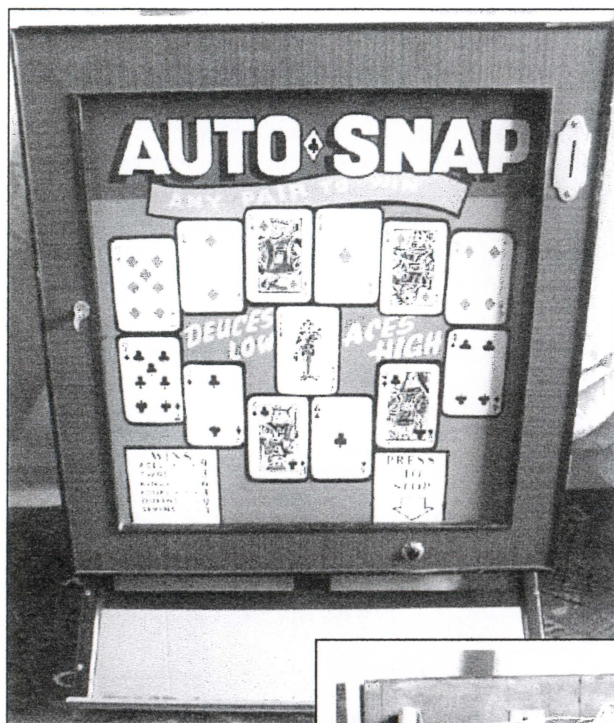
# Snap!

By Stuart Dale

I have just been photographing some of my machines, and I thought it would be a nice idea to put pen to paper (actually it was finger to keyboard, but that's progress for you) and share some more of my collection with you.

I have a couple of electro-mechanical wall machines called **Snap It** and **Auto-Snap**. Both look to have come from the same maker, although I don't know who that maker was, nor have I ever seen any other machines like them. They both work on the same principle but the Auto-Snap has the addition of a skill button to try and increase your chances of winning. Both machines are on old penny play and I would think they date from the late 1950s. You have to be very careful when running the machines with the doors open, as every part of the circuit is live at 240volts, with lots of little brass pegs and switches to brush your unsuspecting hands against. That said, it is not uncommon to find exposed electrics on a machine of this type and age.





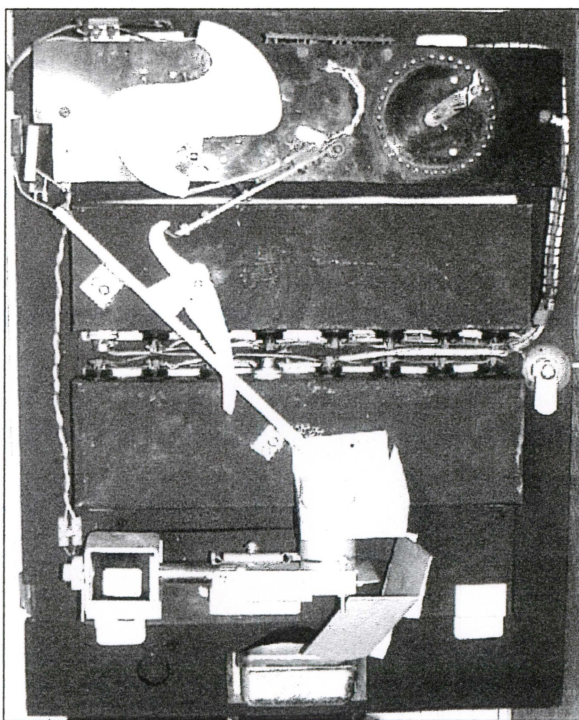
*Above, Auto Snap and (inset) its mechanism. Opposite page, Snap It.*



Once the machine is plugged in to the power supply, the right hand motor starts to turn and a contact brushes round the inside of the circle of brass pins, this in turn quickly flashes the lamps behind the display glass. When a coin is inserted into the machine, a mechanical trip is dislodged. This makes a contact to start the left hand motor, which slowly turns a cam one half of a revolution. This cam brakes the contact to the right hand motor, and if the right hand motor stops on a winning combination of lamps on the display glass the machine pays out that amount via the left-hand motor, which is still turning. Once the payout is complete, the left-hand motor stops and the right hand motor restarts and the lamps continue to flash until another penny is inserted into slot. The skill button on the Auto-Snap can only be used for a few seconds each time a coin is inserted in the machine, the idea is that you can try and stop it on a winning combination yourself (not easy to do). They are both very good at parting you from your pennies and are very addictive to play.

If anyone has any information on these machines or the maker, why not drop a line to Mechanical Memories Magazine and share it with us all.

*Stuart Dale*



*The relatively simple Snap It mechanism.*



# A Mystery Football Game

By James Fairley

Sometime during 1960 – 62, I saw a slot machine with a football pools theme in an arcade in Morecombe. Whilst I cannot be sure of some of the details, the following is probably a fairly accurate description.

It looked fairly modern and was of the pinball/bagatelle type, with a playfield measuring only around twelve inches wide by eighteen inches deep. It consisted essentially of three parallel gates through which the ball could pass: the first for a home win, the second for an away win and the third for a draw. The player got three balls for his money. Fired in sequence, the object was simply to score a home win, an away win and a draw.

The machine drew a lot of attention, and whoever invented it was a master of cunning psychology. First, it gave the impression of a win on the pools, which were extremely popular at that time, long before the National Lottery. Second, the chances of winning appeared to be much greater than they actually were, especially in the early stages of the game. After all, the first ball was a sure winner to start with, and the second ball had a two-thirds chance of going into either of the two other gates required. Up to this point there was therefore a better than evens chance of everything having gone right, and the player could take some satisfaction. All the player then had to do was get the last ball through the remaining gate. As a student with limited resources, I watched more than played, and some of the punters were evidently carried away by what was essentially a very simple system.

Unfortunately, as the chances of success with the three balls were respectively:  $1/1$ ,  $2/3$ ,  $1/3$ , the overall odds of winning (by multiplying together) were only two chances out of nine. I cannot remember the payout, but it was probably double the cost of play, which may have been a penny. So the arcade proprietor pocketed over half the money inserted.

Can anyone provide the name of this machine, its maker or any further details?

*James Fairley*

# Who Built Allwins?

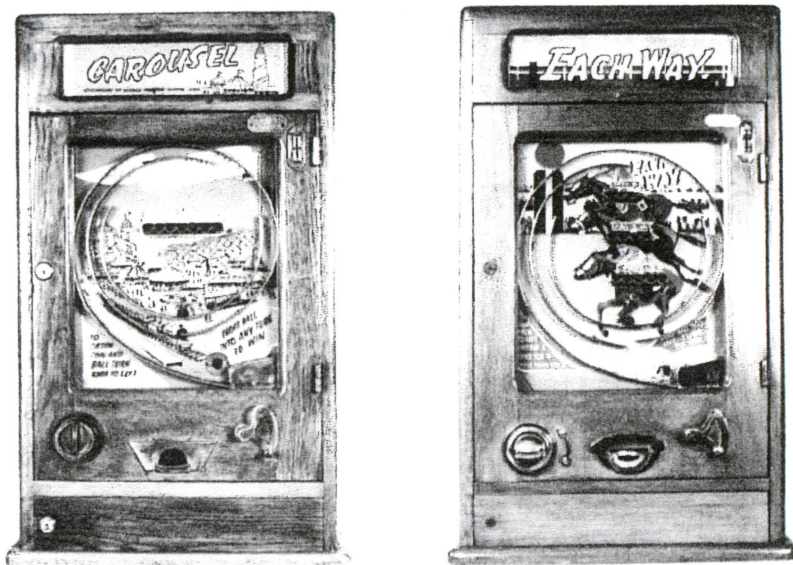
By Jerry Chattenton

Assuming you all read the magazine from the beginning, and finish at the end, you will already have read Robert's piece on Timer Machines. This prompted me to voice a few views and pose a few questions on a subject that has been bugging me for many years: who built the allwins we now collect? Now, at this point some of you may be wondering where I'm going with this, and are probably thinking "Come on Jerry, you've heard of *Bryans*, *Whales*, *BMCo*.....haven't you?" Yes, of course I have, but there are many names associated with allwins about whom we know nothing, and whose claim to manufacture may be dubious. Equally, there are many machines to which we cannot attribute a manufacturer. At this point, I should make clear that I am restricting this debate (and remember, these are only my views; I have no concrete information to offer) to post WWII allwins, as the situation with pre-war machines is even more murky, and will have to wait for another time.

So, let's first consider what is meant by 'manufacture'. In an ideal world, a manufacturer of allwins would produce almost everything 'in-house'. Machined parts would be produced in the machine shop; cases would be made in the joinery shop; there might be a small foundry to produce castings, which would then go to the machine shop for finishing. A large manufacturing concern might even have a plating shop for chroming external parts and zinc or cadmium plating internal components. Finally, all the individual components and sub assemblies would be assembled into finished machines, which would then go off to the shipping department. However, British coin-operated machines were never produced in an 'ideal world', and most were assembled in small workshops, rather than manufactured in large factories. Our home produced machines were in a completely different league to those produced by the mighty American companies, or manufacturers such as Gunter Wulff in Germany.

Of all the post-war makers of allwins, perhaps the closest to 'full manufacture' was Bryans. Fortunately, we do know quite a bit about Bryans, certainly far more than any other maker. We know that the cases for Bryans allwins were produced by a local cabinetmaker, and that castings were produced at a local foundry, but almost everything else was produced at the Bryans factory. There are actually very few castings to be found in Bryans allwin mechanisms, almost every component is machined, cold-formed or fabricated, all produced in-house. Even so, the Bryans factory could hardly be described as vast. Paul Braithwaite, in *Arcades and Slot Machines* (Carters book), reports that even at peak times, Bryans employed no more than about twenty workers! (Just as an aside, the largest factory I know of concerned with the manufacture of coin-operated machines was Hawtins, of Blackpool. But that can wait for another time).

Now let's consider Oliver Whales, probably the most prolific maker of allwins in the 1950s and 60s. As with Bryans, cases would have been supplied by a local cabinet-maker and castings produced at a local foundry. However, it is my guess that Whales never actually 'made' anything, or least not much, and that the majority of component parts would have been supplied by local engineering businesses. Whales and a small number of staff would then have merely assembled the machines. The same can be said of Parkers. Indeed, it has been suggested that Parkers allwins were basically Whales machines assembled in Rhyl, as it is thought that Whales supplied many of the parts. If you think about it, it certainly makes sense given that Whales and Parkers machines are so similar. Why have suppliers in Cleveland and suppliers in North Wales producing exactly the same components?



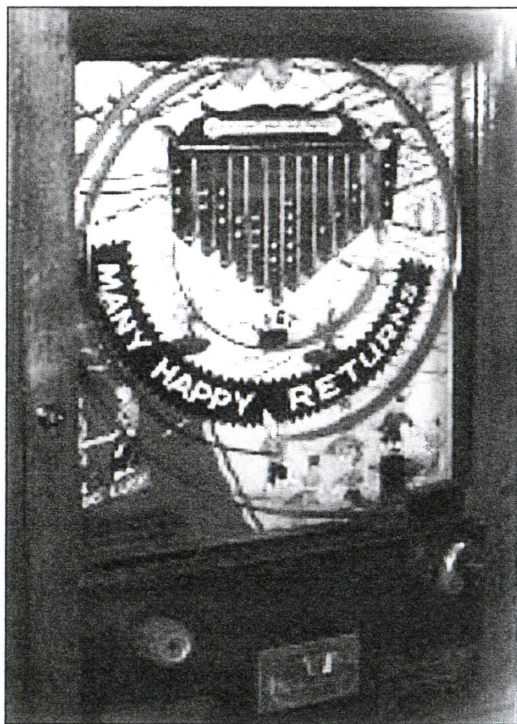
**Left, Parkers Carousel. Right, Whales Each Way. Very similar, aren't they?**

What about Wondermatics? Again, very little is known about this manufacturer, often considered to be Whales' closest competitor. I suspect that, as with Whales, most of the component parts were supplied by local engineers, and then assembled in a relatively small workshop rather than a huge factory. I also think it is a reasonable guess that although the various makers were technically competitors, there would also have been a degree of co-operation and collaboration between them, perhaps supplying each other with parts. For instance, have you ever noticed that the ratchet assemblies on Whales and Wonders machines are exactly the same?



So does all this matter? Of course not, after all, car manufacturers don't make everything that goes into their cars. Small components through to more complex assemblies such as alternators and starter motors are all manufactured by outside suppliers.

So far then, we have four manufacturers of allwins: Bryans, Whales, Wondermatics and Parkers, but there were many others, some of which will probably remain in obscurity forever. Without doubt, the biggest problem encountered by those of us interested in researching our coin-op past, has been the reluctance by the majority of machine manufacturers to actually put their names on their machines. This has been confounded by another factor: distributors and suppliers. As a result, machines have been attributed to firms who, in reality, were merely distributors. The best example of this is Ruffler & Walker, the largest of all the coin-op distributors, who supplied the trade with a large range of allwins, all labelled Ruffler & Walker, but none of which were actually made by them. The most common survivors of the R & W range are the giant column-fill allwins, such as **Many Happy Returns** and **Fill 'em Up**, which were actually manufactured by Corteen Ltd., of Erith, Kent. This is another manufacturer about which we know almost nothing, apart from the snippet of information supplied by Paul Braithwaite in *Arcades and Slot Machines*. Corteen machines are well engineered,



*Ruffler & Walker or Corteen Many Happy Returns.*

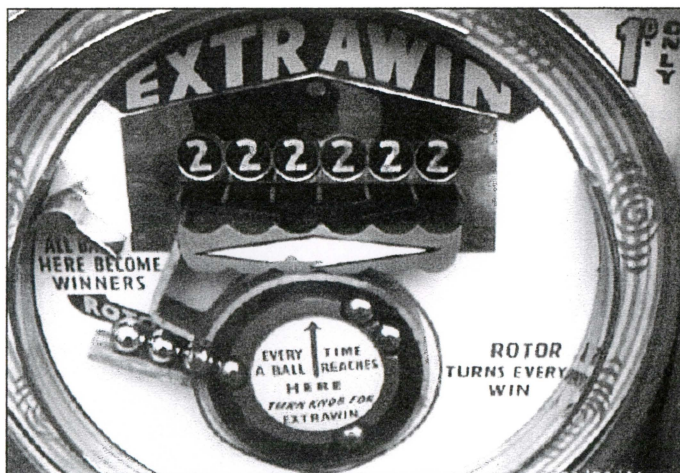


and in my view, far superior to many others of the era. Corteen appear to have produced allwins exclusively for Ruffler & Walker, which is probably why R & W were able to put their own name on the machines. Other allwins produced by Corteen include **Earth Satellite** and **Hat Trick**, again both giant allwins. It is likely that they also produced at least some of the R & W sweetie allwins, and I suspect the R & W hockey tables.

I have for many years intended researching further into this company, partly because they were situated only three or four miles from where I live, and partly because I like a challenge! Sadly, the large industrial area in Church Road (which I remember well) where Corteen were situated is now gone, and has been replaced by housing (as if we haven't got enough bloody housing in the Southeast)! As a point of interest, that part of Church Road has now been renamed Wheatstone Road, because the way the existing houses in the upper part of the road were numbered, the new houses would have had to have negative numbers!

So where does Robert's article come in to all this? Well, let's start with the 'so-called' Kraft allwins. There are a number of allwins, which for as long as I've been collecting, have always been attributed to Kraft Automatics. Some of these are very innovative and incorporate features that set them apart from others of the era. Perhaps the two best known are **Extrawin** and **Crackerjack**; others include **Win a Race**, **Speedway**, **Double Your Win**, and of course as Robert mentions, **Beat the Clock**. However, I have for some time suspected that Kraft did not actually manufacture these allwins, but merely acted as agents. In fact, with the exception of the working models produced in the early fifties, I doubt whether Kraft made any machines.

The so-called Kraft machines are distinctive in many respects, not least the ball galleries and gallery shields, which have sharp angular edges. The galleries themselves are unusual in that they are not made up from individual tubes, but are solid castings



*The ball gallery on Extrawin. Compare this with the Time Limit gallery on page 7*

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with a central gully that directs the ball back into the mechanism. In addition, I wonder how many of you have noticed in the past that the galleries on Extrawin and Crackerjack (and probably others) have only six positions, as opposed to the usual seven? Now compare the picture of the Extrawin gallery on the page 17 with the picture of Robert's Time Limit on page 7. They're exactly the same, indicating that all these machines are the product of the same manufacturer.

However, I realised there was a connection between Kraft allwins and Time Limit many years ago, long before I made the connection with the ball galleries. Over a period of less than a year, I came across two later versions of Extrawin that were housed in exactly the same style cases as Time Limit. Whereas the Kraft allwins had nice oak cases, which would probably have been produced from the early fifties through to perhaps the early sixties, the Time Limit case can be described no more generously than a plywood box! No doubt very modern at the time, but clearly a much later style, which I guess would be no earlier than mid sixties. Unfortunately, I have not seen any of the later versions of Extrawin since, and I can't remember whether those I saw all those years ago were marked Amusement Machine Mart.

So who were Amusement Machine Mart? This was the company name of Morris Shefras, based in East Molesey, Surrey. He and his brother Philip had been involved in the coin-op business for many years, originally working with their father Solomon Shefras in the 1930s. The company letterhead opposite is advertising 'two new machines for 1953', the **Double Diamond** and **Double Diamond De Luxe** both being so-called Kraft machines (I've never actually seen a Double Diamond De Luxe, which appears to be a giant allwin). It's interesting to note that the letter proclaims 'New and Used machines bought, sold, exchanged. Machines overhauled' and 'we can supply most machines in the right condition – at the right price' but doesn't specifically mention anything about manufacturing machines. Nonetheless, I do think it was Morris Shefras who was responsible for the Kraft machines, albeit assembled from parts supplied by sub contractors.

However, questions still remain:

Why is it that only Time Limit is marked 'Amusement Machine Mart?'

Were the later versions of Extrawin similarly labelled?

And more generally, was there someone in the coin-op business or an engineering company that supplied parts to several allwin manufacturers? For instance, is it not odd that the coin entries on Whales, Parkers, and AMM machines are all exactly the same? Could it have been Shefras?

If you know the answers, or can come up with any more questions, please let me know!

*Jerry*



**Lineage ads. are free to subscribers and will run for two issues, unless you instruct me otherwise. Please ensure I have your ads. by the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month for inclusion in the next month's issue. Remember to include your telephone number and the area where you live. Post or e-mail to the address on page 2**

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Bollands Haunted House working model. Please keep a note of my number if selling in the future. Thankyou.

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Laminated or paper.  
£12 inc. UK postage.

Charlie 07711 978806 (Essex)

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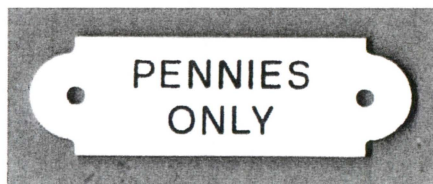
## Original Clown Tokens

Brass or Silver  
£25 per 100, inc. p&p

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## Pennies Only labels



Pennies Only labels, professionally engraved on white/black traffolyte plastic. Suitable for allwins and other wall machines.

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## Large range of allwin spares available

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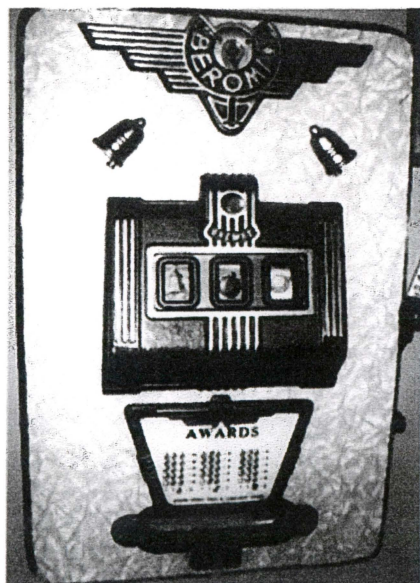
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Crayford, Kent DA1 4RG  
Tel. 01322 550666  
Fax. 01322 558149  
Email: jetageuk@aol.com**

# WANTED

**Electro-mechanical  
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**Anything considered**

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jerry.mmm@tiscali.co.uk**



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**Running on old penny play**

**Nice clean machine with no rot**

**Good, clean & smooth-running  
mech. Plays and pays out correctly  
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**£300 no offers**

**Martin 07754 593502**



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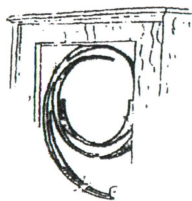
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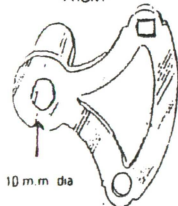


Win Tabs Red printer  
on Silver foil sticky  
backed 12 on a sheet

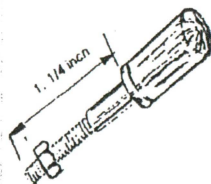


CHROMED 7 ball win  
gallery. 6 x 1.9/16

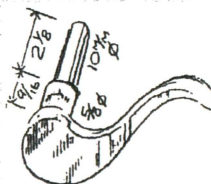
CHROMED TRIGGER  
FRONT



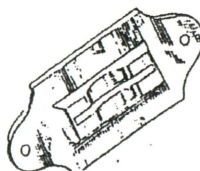
10 m.m. dia



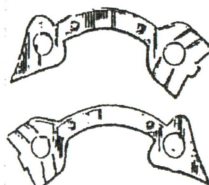
CHROMED THUMB  
STOP



TRIGGER



COIN SLOT  
to suit 2p but can  
be filed bigger



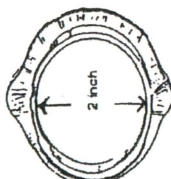
CHROMED ARROWS  
Reversible.

CHROMED PAYOUT BOWL

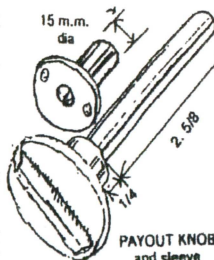


2.5 inch dia cup 2 x 0.25 inch fixing  
squares at 3.75 inch centres.

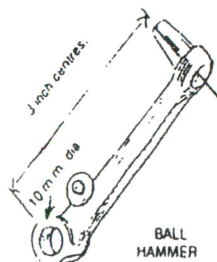
CHROMED KNOB SHIELD



2 x tapped M5 fixing holes on  
extended nipples 2.1/2 centres.

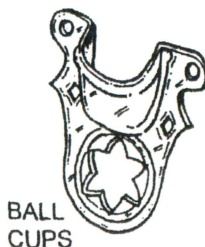


PAYOUT KNOB  
and sleeve



BALL  
HAMMER

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CUPS

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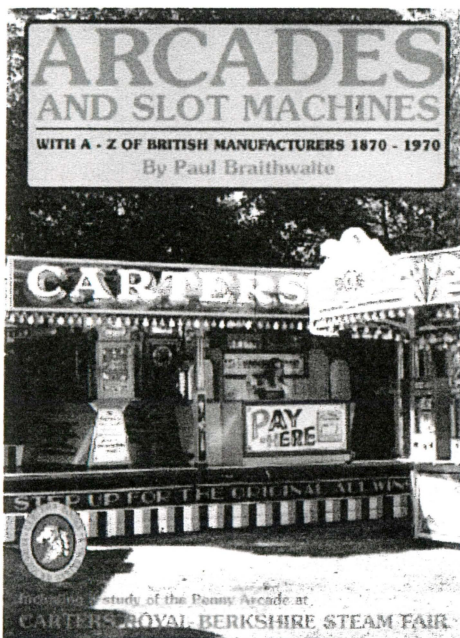


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